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## DEMONOLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATIONAL MAGAZINE.

Sir—As Sir Walter Scott has addressed his “Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft,” to his friend and relation, I do not see why I may not pen a letter on the same subject to you, not, indeed, with the hope of finding the same acceptance that this best of all book-makers has received from Mr. Lockhart and the public. But I confess, Sir, I am not a little angry with Sir Walter—he, of all men, ought not to have aimed his sceptical bolt against the props and machinery of that romance which he has loved, and upon which he has lived. I say it was unbecoming of him to use his philosophical pick-axe, to undermine the whole visionary fabric, that has been to us all an object of so much pleasure and pain, and which from our nurse, and nursery days, has entwined its ivied foliage round all the old castles amid which our imaginations love to dwell. I confess, Sir, that it is, as the Irish say, kind father for ME, to believe in the existence of a union between the spiritual and material worlds, by the means of supernatural agencies; and one of the earliest things I can remember, was my worthy grandfather, on passing by, at midnight, the cemetery of his ancestors, challenging his white hunter, which he took for a sheeted ghost, and shooting through the head, in sad mistake, the best horse that ever followed his hounds. I further remember, that his mishap in this instance, did not in him shake in the least, no more than Sir Walter’s book does in me, the belief in supernatural existences; and he, good old man, when chance parted him from my excellent grandmother, never could be induced to sleep in any bed-chamber, alone. The females also, dwelling under my paternal roof, were equally imbued with those awful, but interesting feelings, which were not a little strengthened by hearing the great and good Mister Wesley himself, announce his conviction of their being well founded; and hint moreover, that it was a step towards Atheism, or at least infidelity, to doubt, what no true Christian was justified in calling into question. To believe then, in witches, ghosts, and fairies, has been *my* creed—shall I say my pleasure, ever since my infancy; pleasure I say, for if there be a joy of battle, which the warrior can feel, who will presume to tell me (when I believe, never was there a person who did not feel pleasurable interest in a good hair-bristling-up ghost story) that there is not a joy in these credulities, which belong to every age, and every people, and country, on the broad earth? I, therefore, Mr. Editor, as a good credulous Irishman, will not let Sir Walter, or any man, put an extinguisher upon the romance of my life; he shall not, with his logio and special pleading, blow out the credence that is, as it were, burnt in on my imagination; and, I would as soon believe Bishop Berkeley, who, with much greater powers of argument, would persuade us that there existed no matter, than believe such philosophisers as Drs. Hibbert, Ferrier, and M’Nish, or Sir Walter, recreant as he is against the romance, by which he has been lifted up on high. I conceive, Sir, that I have just as much reason to join the worthy company of good old ghost, and fairy, and devil believers, as to become a convert to these modern Sadducees. I think when I have on my side all the eminent historians of Greece and Rome, from Herodotus to Livy—when I have all the oriental poets, and mollahs, and brahmins—when I can count Albertus Magnus, and Cardan, and Paracelsus, and Franciscus Picus Mirandola, Olaus Magnus, and Bishop Pontopidan—when I have Bodinus, Delrio, Remigius, Gaffarel,

De Loyer, and De Lancre, &c. &c. amongst Roman Catholics; and Luther, Melancthon, and Camerarius, all our own early Protestant and Puritan divines, not to specify Perkins, Mathers, Glanvill, Scott, worthy Mr. Hopkins, Baxter, and the platonic Henry More; and in our own day, Dr. Johnson, Mister Wesley, and all preachers of the Methodist connexion, and that prodigy of learning, Dr. Adam Clarke, the commentator on Scripture; when I stand in company with such men, I need neither be ashamed or afraid. I assure you, Sir, I would at any time rather encounter a Sadducee than a ghost. Now, in my humble opinion, Sir Walter Scott and his associates, when they would tear up all the landmarks of old and cherished credulity—use bad logic, as well as exhibit bad taste and feeling. I cannot conceive how they can overthrow the well-known and well-feared existences that all people have believed in, by recording certain spurious ghostifications and pseudo witcheries, which no more destroy the realities they would imitate, than the detected juggleries of a false religion should overthrow the credibility of the true; or that the whole healing art should be considered a humbug, because certain deceivers, calling themselves doctors, may be found deluding the world by their quackeries. No, gentlemen, the convictions that man carries along with him from the cradle to the grave, which begin in the nursery, and mingle with the dust of the tomb—for

“ Even in our ashes live their wonted fears—”

these you cannot eradicate, and they will survive with mankind, from Indus to the Pole, when such puny scepticism will expire along with all the fond philosophies which bubble up, and burst upon the surface of society.

Would it not have been better for Sir Walter Scott, like good old Cardan, to have kept to the old credence, even while detecting the false appearances that were palmed on the world as supernatural. Cardan reports, how once upon a time in the city of Milan, there was seen high up in the mid-air, the appearance of an angel resting on the clouds, lifting his threatening spear, as if to strike the guilty city. This, some philosophers found out to be only the reflection of an image of St. Michael the archangel, that was sculptured in marble on the top of the church of St. Godart. Now, Cardan, if he was like Sir Walter, would have turned all apparitions into ridicule—but no, he did not—for he still believed in *real* spectres—such, for instance, as that of St. Celestine, at the city of Aqueleia, or St. Petronia at Boulogne;—neither, I am sure, did Erasmus, when he tells the story of a priest, who, on all-souls night, sent a bushel of crabs with little candles stuck to their backs, through his churchyard, and thereby succeeded in corroborating the belief of his parishioners, that the souls in Purgatory were on that occasion all abroad;—he certainly did not disbelieve either in ghosts or Purgatory, for we are assured he died a good Catholic. I, as well as Erasmus, or Cardan, am free to allow, that persons either for their profit, their merriment, or their revenge, and desirous to work on the purses, the fears, or lives of their victims, have taken advantage of truth to advance their own falsehoods. For instance, what could have been more atrocious than what is recorded by Hollingshed, as having occurred in the city of Kilkenny: and as it has escaped Sir Walter, we intend to give him and our readers the advantage of the narrative.

“ In the reign of Edward the Second, lived in the diocese of Ossory, when Richard Ledred was bishop, the lady, Alice Ketler, whom the prelate ascited into his spiritual court, to purge herself of the foul accusation of being a witch, and of devising and using enchantments; and along

with her were accused as complices, one Petronil and one Basil ; she and they were charged with having nightly conferences with a spirit, called Robin Artisson, to whom she sacrificed in the highway nine red cocks, and cast into a magic fire the eyes of nine peacocks." Dame Alice's object was not less filthy, than her proceedings were foul ; for her desire was to put her son, William Outlaw, in possession of all the dung in Kilkenny ; (and if we recollect aright of this good city, though it be paved with marble, yet, it never could be ascertained what the pavement was, by reason of its filth.) Well, Dame Ketler, by the aid, as was said, of her imps, swept the streets every night between complin and twilight, raking all the dung towards the door of her son William Outlaw, murmuring and muttering all the while secretly between her teeth, these words—

" To the house of William, my son,  
Hie all the wealth of Kilkenny town."

The bishop, we are told, prosecuted these dunghill devil-dealers with all his vengeance ; happily he succeeded in reducing them to do penance, and in the first instance to abjure their wickedness, and after their relapse, he had the good success of burning Petronil. Ketler and Basil escaped, but their secret places were broken open, where were found a sacramental wafer, having the devil's name stamped on it, and a pipe of ointment, containing the identical magic grease wherewith she anointed her broomstick ; when according as she listed, she set forth to amble and gallop through the midnight air.

Arnold de la Poer, seneschal of Kilkenny, an ancestor, it is presumed, of the Marquis of Waterford, did not altogether like these proceedings of the bishop, more especially when he clapped into durance, William Outlaw, who was kept in solitary confinement for nine weeks, and from which he would never have departed, except to expire at the stake, (for Petronil had accused him of being privy to all his mother's sorceries,) had not Poer released Outlaw, and even had the hardihood to turn the tables on the bishop, and put *him* into confinement, preparative to his trial, for his conduct towards these unfortunate people. This brought on a terrible commotion, and as our historian says, it troubled all the state of Ireland. The released bishop raised the church on his side, Le Poer appealed to the chief justice, but all the chief justice could do, though he did his best, was of no avail ; for Le Poer was arrested, and left to die in prison ; and the chief justice himself was accused of heretical pravity and abetting magic ; and so the bishop of Ossory had for a time the upper hand of all ; and he moreover succeeded in burning another respectable gentleman, named Adam Duff, for heresy, and there is no knowing how far his zeal would have carried him, had not the archbishop of Dublin found it expedient to turn the tables, and accuse his too active suffragan even of heresy, and so he was forced to quit the kingdom and proceed to Rome, where he laid at the feet of the successor of Peter, all his merits and complaints ; and history remains silent, as to whether Ireland was ever again dignified and disturbed with his presence.—Now, we are almost inclined to believe that the Right Rev. Richard Ledred, on this occasion, exercised rather his malice than his clear-sightedness in witch-finding—but are we from this to argue against all magic and witchcraft?—I wot not—that would be arguing from particulars to universals. No—if I go from Lapland to India, I find the belief in witchcraft universal. Am I to disbelieve, because of some clumsy imitation, what historians of all countries have asserted, or why should I believe the battles, the speeches, the negotiations they record,

if I am not to receive their prodigies? For instance, if I find it recorded by St. Augustine, in his work *De Civitate Dei*, that the father of Prestantius, in consequence of eating a magical cake, thought he was turned into a horse—am I to disbelieve the worthy father? or am I to disbelieve Herodotus, the father of history, when he assures me that the Neuri became wolves during certain seasons of the year—or what Albert Remigius records in his history of Denmark, how Frotho, a prince given to sorcery, kept at his court a certain witch, who could turn herself into all forms imaginable. This witch had a son as wicked as herself, and they made use of their property of transformation, to the unfair purpose of abducting the greater part of the king's riches from his treasury; which the king suspecting, went to the cunning woman's house, but she turned herself into a cow, and her son into a calf, and the king coming too near the malignant beast, she up with her hoof and gave his majesty such a kick, and at the same time such a prod with her horn, that he died upon the spot. We also find in the wars of the Scandinavian Peninsula, that A. D. 1563, the Swedes in going to battle with the Danes, brought with them as munition of war, in place of bombs and battering rams, four witches; these fearful old women, by their incantations, not only insured victory to the Swedes, but they altogether rendered imbecile the poor Danes. One of these hags was taken by count Gunther of Swartzenburg, and she confessed for what purpose she was employed; moreover, after the departure of the Swedes, on the line of their march long threads were found, to which were attached wooden crosses and cabalistic characters—*Wolfii Lectiones memorabilia*.

In order to show how extensive public opinion is in favour of those supernatural powers, suppose we skip from Denmark even to Asia, and observe how, even at the utmost Ind, the same general confidence is placed, and that justly in supernatural powers. There, at this moment, lies before me, the auto-biography of the Great Mogul Jehangueir, translated from the Persian by Major Price. And there, this great and accomplished monarch relates what he was an eye witness to, and surely before such a mighty despot no man dare deceive. "On one occasion there came to my court," says he, "some men, who confidently boasted that they were capable of producing effects so strange, as far to exceed the scope of the human understanding—they exhibited in the performances things of so extraordinary a nature, as without actual demonstration, the world would not have conceived possible," &c. &c.

"First. They stated that of any tree that should be named they would set the seed in the earth, and that I should immediately witness the extraordinary result. Khaun-e-Jahaun, one of the nobles present, observed that if they spoke truly, he should wish them to produce for his conviction a mulberry tree. The men arose without hesitation, and having in ten separate spots set some seed in the ground, they recited among themselves, in cabalistical language unintelligible to the standers-by, when instantly a plant was seen springing from each of the ten places, and each proved the tree required by Khaun-e-Jahaun. In the same manner they produced a mango, an apple tree, a cypress, a pine-apple, a fig tree, an almond, a walnut, and many more trees, and this without any attempt at concealment in operation; but open to the observation of all present, the trees were perceived gradually and slowly springing from the earth, to the height of one, or perhaps of two cubits, when they shot forth leaves and branches; the apple tree in particular producing fruit, which fruit was brought to me, and I can attest to its fragrance.

"The fact was not however confined to the apple tree alone, for having made the other trees appear in the manner above described, they said that if I thought fit to order it, I should taste of the fruit of every tree, which

did not fail to increase the astonishment already excited. Then making a sort of procession round the trees as they stood, and invoking certain names, in a moment there appeared on the respective trees a sweet mango without the *rind*, an almond fresh and ripe, a large fig of the most delicious kind, and so with the pine, and every other tree of which they had set the seed, the fruit being pulled in my presence and brought to me, and every one present was allowed to taste of it. This, however was not all; before the trees were removed there appeared among the foliage birds of such surprising beauty, in colour, and shape, and melody of song, as the world never saw before; and the more to confirm us in the reality, the birds were observed to whisper to each other, and to flutter and contend with each other, in playful indifference, among the branches. At the close of the operation the foliage, as in autumn, was seen to put on its variegated tints, and the trees gradually disappeared into the earth from which they had been made to spring. I can only further observe, that if the circumstances which I have now described had not happened in my own presence, I could never have believed that they had any existence in reality.

"Secondly. One night, and in the very middle of the night, when half this globe was wrapped in darkness, one of these seven men stripped himself almost naked, and having spun himself swiftly round several times, he took a sheet with which he covered himself, and from beneath the sheet drew out a resplendent mirror, by the radiance of which a light so powerful was produced, as to have illuminated the hemisphere to an incredible distance round; to such a distance indeed, that we have the attestation of travellers to the fact, who declared that on a particular night, the same night on which the exhibition took place, and at the distance of ten days' journey, they saw the atmosphere so powerfully illuminated, as to exceed the brightness of the brightest day that they had ever seen. This also may be considered, I think, among the extraordinary things of the age."

"Ninth.\* They produced a man whom they divided limb from limb, actually severing his head from the body. They scattered these mutilated members along the ground, and in this state they lay for some time. They then extended a sheet or curtain over the spot, and one of the men putting himself under the sheet, in a few minutes came from below, followed by the individual supposed to have been cut into joints, in perfect health and condition, and one might have safely sworn that he had never received wound or injury whatever."

"Eleventh. They made an excavation in the earth in the shape of a tank or reservoir, of considerable dimensions, which they requested us to fill with water. When this was done they spread a covering over the place, and after a short interval having removed the cover, the water appeared to be one complete sheet of ice, and they desired that some of the elephant keepers might be directed to lead their elephants across. Accordingly one of the men set his elephant upon the ice, and the animal walked over with as much ease and safety as if it were a platform of solid rock, remaining for some time on the surface of the frozen pond without occasioning the slightest fracture in the ice. As usual, the sheet was drawn across the place, and being again removed, every vestige of ice, and even moisture of any sort, had completely disappeared."

"Twelfth. They caused two tents to be set up at the distance of a bow-shot the one from the other, the doors or entrance being placed exactly opposite; they raised the tent walls all around, and desired that it might be particularly observed that they were entirely empty. Then fixing the tent walls to the ground, two of the seven men entered, one in each tent, none other of the seven entering either of the tents. Thus prepared, they said they would undertake to bring out of the tents any animal we chose to mention, whether bird or beast, and set them in conflict with each other. Khaun-e-Jahaun, with a smile of incredibility, required them to show us a

\* The reader will perceive that I only give a few of the magical experiments performed before the Great Mogul.

battle between two ostriches. In a few minutes two ostriches of the largest size issued, one from either tent, and attacked each other with such fury that the blood was seen streaming from their heads; they were at the same time so equally matched, that neither could get the better of the other, and they were therefore separated by the men, and conveyed within the tents. My son Khoodum then called for the neilahgão, and immediately were seen to issue from the tents two of those untameable animals, equally large, fat, and fierce, which likewise commenced a furious combat, seized each other by the neck, and alternately forcing one another backwards and forwards for the space of nearly two guhries of time, after which they were also separated, and withdrawn into the tents. In short, they continued to produce from either tent whatever animal we chose to name, and before our eyes set them to fight in the manner I have attempted to describe; and although I have exerted my utmost invention to discover the secret of the contrivance, it has hitherto been entirely without success."

"Nineteenth. One of the seven men stood up before me, and setting open his mouth, immediately out came the head of a snake. Another of the men seized the snake by the neck, and drew it out to the length of four cubits. This being disposed of by casting it to the ground, another followed in the same manner, and so on to the number of eight, none of them less than four or five cubits in length. These being all cast loose upon the ground, were immediately seen writhing in the folds of each other, and tearing one another with the greatest apparent fury: a spectacle not less strange than frightful."

"Twenty-first. They arranged in my presence ten empty porcelain jars, all in attendance having witnessed that they were actually and entirely empty. In about half an hour they uncovered the jars, when, to our surprise, one was found to be full of wheat, another of preserves, another of sugar-candy, another of different sorts of pickles, another of ladies'-legs, another of citron, and another of tamarind. In short, every one of the jars contained a different eatable of some kind or other, which was presented to me, and tasted by most of those who were in attendance. After a little space they uncovered the jars for the last time, and they were seen to be completely empty, and as clean as if they had been an hundred times washed in the purest spring water. This was also considered something strange and surprising."

"Twenty-third. They produced a chain of fifty cubits in length, and in my presence threw one end of it towards the sky, where it remained as if fastened to something in the air. A dog was then brought forward, and being placed at the lower end of the chain, immediately ran up, and reaching the other end, immediately disappeared in the air. In the same manner a hog, a panther, a lion, and a tiger, were alternately sent up the chain, and all equally disappeared at the upper end of the chain. At last they took down the chain and put it into a bag, no one even discovering in what way the different animals were made to vanish into the air in the mysterious manner above described. This, I may venture to affirm, was beyond measure strange and surprising."

Having thus shown what can be done by sorcery in the East, I now return to Europe, and in spite of all Sir Walter's special pleading, I would ask him how he will get over the well attested facts that are recorded by Wierus and others, concerning the religious virgins in the monastery of Werts; others in Hessa, and others at Zantes, where numerous eye witnesses were found testifying how strangely and supernaturally these women were treated; some being cast up from the ground higher than a man's head, and falling again without any harm, others swarming upon trees as nimbly as cats, and hanging upon the boughs, like monkies pendulous from a banian tree—(how curious it would be, now-a-days, to see the nuns of Ranelagh convent thus nestling and cawing like rooks amidst the lofty elms that surround that venerable cenobium)—others having their flesh torn off their bodies, without any visible hand or in-

strument. How will the Sadducee account for the well attested facts of knives, balls of hair, nails, and buttons, being ejected from the bodies of persons bedeviled and bewitched, which facts have not only been attested by sundry writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but even in our own day, a worthy Franciscan, Father Hayes, from a Catholic pulpit in Dublin, declared he saw in Rome such things ; but I pass over all meaner details, to afford the reader a fact which Wierus relates, concerning Magdalena De Crucia, abbess of a convent at Cordova, in Spain. This woman had the reputation of a prophetess, for she could tell what was going on in all places of the world, and nothing could equal the odour of her sanctity, as was evidenced by things strange and most miraculous. At the celebrating of the holy eucharist, the priest always found one of the wafers absent, which was conveyed to Magdalene, as was supposed by the ministration of angels. At the elevation of the host, Magdalene being near at hand, but yet a wall betwixt, the wall was seen to open, and exhibit her to the view of all the people receiving the host. When the abbess came into the convent chapel, she was wont to exhibit some notable miracle ; sometimes she would be lifted off the ground three or four cubits high ; at other times, bearing the image of the Redeemer, and weeping *savourly*, (as mine author has it) she would make her hair increase to that length, so as to reach to her heels, and cover her and the image in her arms : and all at once, these long tresses would shrink up, and contract into the shortness that becomes a religionier. The catastrophe of this woman's story, though strange, ought to corroborate its truth ; for it is evident thereby it is not an invented tale to advance the cause of the Roman religion ; for Magdalene became (although she had been brought down to the coast by king Philip, to bestow her blessing on the Spanish Armada) suspected of sorcery ; and being brought to examination, she confessed, that for thirty years she had been married to the devil, in the shape of an Ethiopian ; that another devil, servant to her satanic lover, used to supply her place amongst the nuns, when she was occupied *tele á tele* with her fond spouse ; and that it was by virtue of her contract with him that she performed all her miracles. Of course, she was committed to prison ; but though in strict durance, she appeared every day in her convent chapel in the posture of praying : and though the inquisitors set a strict watch over her, nevertheless, in spite of them, she would appear still at her devotions at the altar.

There are many relations of this kind I might bring to bear on my subject ; indeed I feel puzzled amidst the variety of matter I might adduce : for instance, is not that a pregnant one which Martinus Weinrichius, a Silesian physician, relates of a certain shoemaker, in a town of his country, who, having cut his throat with his own knife, his afflicted family, being ashamed of his unholy act, pretending that he died of apoplexy, got him buried with Christian rites ? but not long after his interment, there appeared a spectre, in the exact shape and dress of the deceased, with his throat cut from ear to ear ; and he became the trouble of the whole town : by day and night he vexed the people—he would come and lie by them at night, and press upon them while sleeping, like a night-mare. Sometimes he would stand by their bed-sides, sometimes lie close to the maids, and pinch them black and blue, so that the impression of his fingers would be left on their bodies in the morning. Nay, so noisome and troublesome was this apparition, that when the people forsook their beds for dread of him, and kept watch all night in their parlours, he would appear amongst them, and toss, and tumble, and destroy the furniture in a most awful manner. At length the town



could bear it no longer, and they called on the magistracy for relief, who, upon consultation, thought it expedient to dig up the body of the shoemaker; and, lo! though he had lain in the ground seven months, from September 22, 1591, to April 18, 1592, his body was found sound, sweet, and flexible; nay, more, it appeared to have grown fat—the wound in his throat was found gaping, but it was green and fresh, just as the knife left it—a magical mark was found on the tip of his big toe, in the form of a cabbage rose: his body was kept over ground eight days, but still it continued its old pranks. It was then buried under the gallows; but he became worse, for now he did not spare his own family, and the widow came weeping to complain to the magistrate. He was accordingly dug up again, and found to be grown more fleshy and corpulent than before: they then cut off his head, arms, and legs, opening his back, they took out his heart, which was as fresh and entire as that of a calf new killed; so, to make a full revenge on him, they collected a pile of wood, and burnt him to ashes, and scattered the cinders over the river; after which the spectre was seen no more. This was done in Breslaw in Silesia, where Weinrichies lived, who knew all the parties. But this was not so bad as the fearful things committed by Johannes Contius, a citizen of Pentsch, in Silesia, an alderman of the town, of sixty years of age, and fair in his deportment, and altogether unblameable. This worthy had become suddenly rich, and the richer he grew the wiser he was considered; and so great was his discretion and judgment, that he became arbiter of disputes, and all men looked up to him. One evening, after supping with the mayor, on going home, he was called into his stable to look at one of his many geldings, that had some lameness; and while lifting his foot, the mettlesome beast gave him a kick in the lower part of his stomach, which knocked him down; and when he arose he felt grievous pain, and he continually cried, “Woe is me, how I do burn, and am grievously in fear!” The man took to his bed, and seemed sorely afflicted both in body and mind, and he loudly complained that his sins were unpardonable; and he in a few days died, without letting a divine near him, nor did he confess to any. After his death, several rumours went abroad concerning the sudden manner in which he became rich; and it was even asserted that he sold the life of one of his sons and his own soul to the devil. The night he died his eldest son watched with him, and just as he gave up the ghost, a black cat, opening the casement with her nails, frisked upon the bed of the departing man, and violently scratched at his face, and then departed as she came. He, however, as he was rich, and his family could pay for it, had a Christian burial, even beside the altar in the church; but at the time that *de profundis* was singing, such a storm of wind and snow came down, that all the mourners did quake and chatter with their teeth, but the moment he was interred there ensued a great calm. He was not buried two days when it was rumoured through all the town that an incubus or night-mare, in the shape of Contius, attempted to do violence to a woman. Many other appearances he made, and pranks he committed, some good and some bad; a good one he did, when he appeared to a godfather of one of his children, and about the eleventh hour, announced to him, “I have left,” says he, “behind me my youngest son James, to whom you are godfather, and now mark, there are 415 florins in a chest which is in the possession of my eldest son, Stephen—they are intended for James; and I tell you this because, as godfather to the child, you are bound to look after him.” Having said this, the spectre departed, and as he went down stairs, the whole house rattled and the roof swagged with his heavy

stampings. A thousand like appearances he made: he was seen not only riding in the streets, but also along the valleys and mountains, with so strong a trot that the very ground flashed fire under him. He bruised the body of his farrier's child until her bones became so soft that you might twist her corpse like a glove. The parson of the parish, who is the relator of these strange events, was not safe from his assaults; for one night, when asleep, he came over him, and so pressed and squeezed him, that he awoke in a violent shaking of terror, and could not breathe; and then he saw Contius hanging over him, and down the ghost held him, so that he could not wag a finger. Another time, when this theologer was sitting with his wife and children around him, exercising himself with music—as he was wont—a most grievous stink arose, which spread itself over all parts of the room, and became so pestilently noisome, that the good minister had to go to his chamber, and betake himself to rest: but he and his wife were not long a-bed, until out slips the spectre from the wall, and approaching the bed-side, he breathed upon the poor couple with a breath so cold, and at the same time intolerably foetid, that the theologer, good soul, like to die, was fain to keep his bed many days, and his head and stomach swelled so that all thought he was poisoned. But countless were all the malpractices of this spectre. The gelding that struck him never ceased sweating night or day—all the candles in every house he used to frequent would burn no colour but blue—no dairy could be kept clean, but dung and dust were found flung into the milk bowls—he defiled the spring-wells all about the town—the children's cradles could not be rocked, and the brats kept everlastingly crying—he did all manner of mischief to old women, some he pinched, and some he strangled—young women he treated in even a more atrocious manner—and it was observed that the cloth that hung on that side of the altar where his body lay, was, though changed every day, still covered with blood and filth; and it is not a little remarkable that his gravestone was found turned on one side, shelving; and there were several holes in the earth, about the size of mouse-holes, that went down to his very coffin, and however they might be filled with earth, next day they were sure to be found again open. It would be tedious to recount all that by his means happened to that wretched city: trade deserted it—the citizens became worn to skeletons with poverty and hopeless persecution arising from this unquiet ghost. At length the magistrates all assemble, they dig up Contius's ghost—they impanel a jury to try him: the jury, upon inspection of his body, find his skin tender and florid, though it had lain six months—the joints not stiff, but limber—a staff being put into his hands, he grasped it with his fingers very fast—they opened a vein in his leg, and the blood spouted out on the leech that operated—his face was full, with a sort of malicious smile on it—his nostrils open, and not sunk in—there was a mischievous, diabolical, but *not* a ghastly look about him. On these evidences matters went to trial, and Contius's body was condemned to be burnt; accordingly masons were employed to make a hole in the church wall near the altar to drag his body through, but a strong hempen rope broke in the effort; and when at last it was placed on a cart, and the horse which struck Contius, (a lusty jade,) was placed to draw it, the poor beast, after striving and struggling, fell down under the intolerable weight; but at length the body, being brought to the fire, proved as unwilling to be burnt as to be drawn, so that the executioner was fain with hooks to pull him out and cut him in gobbets, in order to make him burn, which while he did, the blood was found so purely spirituous, that it spouted about in his face as he cut him up; and at last, with an expense

of two hundred and sixteen billets of wood, he was burned to ashes, and the ashes being cast on the river, the spectre no more troubled the town of Pentsch. In the words of Doctor Henry More, who has faithfully transcribed this history from the German authorities, "I do say, I must confess, I am so slow-witted myself, that I cannot so much as imagine what the Atheist will excogitate for a subterfuge from so plain and evident convictions."

I cannot help adducing another foreign story, which is alluded to by Wierus—the memorable story of the Piebald Piper of Hamlin, in Saxony. This man, it seems, had the power with his bagpipes of charming all rats and mice, and to draw them, dancing to his music, out of their holes; and having made a compact with the inhabitants of the aforesaid town, and having most sufficiently piped all their vermin into the Elbe, when he demanded his reward, instead of payment he only received jeers, and they scoffed him out of their city; but shortly after, taking advantage of the absence of all the elder people being in church; he came and played up his pipes, and so drew all the children of the town after him until he came to a mountain in the vicinity, called Koppin, and at his music the hill opened, and he and all the children, to the number of three hundred, entered, and never were seen afterwards at Hamlin. This event the citizens of that town have formed into an epocha, and some of their archives are dated "*Anno post exitum puerorum nostrorum.*" About the same time that these children disappeared in Germany, that is to say, in the year 1284, the Transylvanian chronicles relate that a number of strange children were found on St. Peter and St. Paul's day, wandering about the roads in that country, and who seemed to have issued suddenly from the ground; they spoke an unknown tongue, which was afterwards ascertained to be Saxon, and their descendants have continued to speak it to this day. The certain inference was, that these were the identical children whom the piper had inveigled into the mountain, and had led by magical influence, subterraneously, into Transylvania. They have turned out a most valuable people for the country to which they were carried; and their only fault, according to Kircher, the Jesuit, who treats largely about them, is, (and indeed the fault is a proof, according to him, that their leader was certainly Satan;) that the demon still seems to lead their descendants—for they are obstinate heretics—*id est* Protestants at this very day.\* If any one desires to inquire further concerning this extraordinary people, let him consult Dr. Walsh's *Journey from Constantinople to England*.

I am sorry space will not permit me to enlarge on many well-attested facts that I could adduce concerning veritable deeds of witchcraft in England, Scotland, and Ireland. I might relate what came out on the evidence of John Wennick, of Molesworth, in Huntingdonshire, 1645, who bore testimony that he was sucked and visited daily for twenty-nine years, by a spirit, that left its magic mark on his shoulder; or, of Anne Bodenham, a witch, who suffered at Salisbury, 1653. Any one who has a mind to read her story, may consult Edward Bower, an eye-witness and ear-witness, who relates many things concerning that extraordinary witch; and adduces, amongst other facts that were brought against her, the evidence of Anne Styles, who was sent to Mistress Bodenham,

\* There is further evidence of this extraordinary fact. In the tomb of the Pied piper, still exhibited at Pavia, in the church of St. Lawrence's, where the following epitaph can be read:—"Valentino Grævio alias Backfort e Transylvania, Saxon-German—Colonia orto, quem fidibus novo & inusitato artificio canentem audiens, ætas nostra ut alterum Orpheum admirata obstupuit—ob an MDLXXVI."

by the second wife of Richard Goddard of Sarum, Esq. to procure some exemplary punishment upon Mr. Goddard's two daughters, who were aspersed (however unjustly) with the suspicion of having endeavoured to poison their mother-in-law. "The witch, receiving the wench's errand, made a circle, and set a pan of coals therein, and burnt somewhat that stank extremely, and took a looking-glass, and said, "Belzebub, Tormentor, Lucifer, and Satan, appear;" and there appeared five spirits, in the shape of little ragged boys, which the witch commanded to go along with the maid to a meadow at Wilton, which the witch shewed in the looking-glass, and there to gather vervain and dill; and forthwith the ragged boys ran away before the maid until they all came to the meadow, and when they came thither, the boys, or rather imps, scratched for the herbs from under the snow, and found what they wanted; and then they returned, and found the witch within her circle, paring her nails; and then she took the herbs from the imps, who danced about the witch, and then vanished; and then the witch made a powder of the leaves, which she gave to the maid, together with the paring of her nails; and the use of the powder was to make the young gentlewomen, Mistress Sarah and Anne Goddard, rot and swell in their stomachs when they took it, and the paring of her nails was to make them drunk and mad. This powder was shewn at the assizes—the hole also in the witch's finger, out of which blood was squeezed to subscribe a covenant with the devil. These, and many other things, Dr. Henry More declares he heard from those who were present at the assizes, and also of her private conference with the witch, and how he spoke with the maid who gave evidence on this occasion.

All these well-authenticated stories Sir Walter Scott passes by, because his scepticism could not assail the evidence wherewith they are supported. I might, had I time, record many more circumstances, that would bear upon the point in hand—I might adduce what Paulus Grilandus says, of a man not far from Rome, who, at the solicitation of his wife, anointed himself as he saw her do, and was carried into the air to a feast of witches, where they were assembled under a nut-tree, and he not relishing his food without salt, and calling for it, and blessing God for it when it came; at that name the whole assembly disappeared, and he, poor man, was left alone on a dreary common, one hundred miles from home. The same author also writes of a young girl in the dutchy of Spalato, who, on being brought into the same company, and admiring the strangeness of the thing, cried out, "blessed God, what is here to do!" when the whole company vanished, and left her on a desolate heath. And Remigius, speaking of those conventicles, tells the following story amongst many others:—John of Hembach, was carried by his mother to a witches' sabbath, and because he had learned to play on the pipe, was commanded by her to exercise his faculties, and get up into a tree, that they might the better hear his music, which doing, and observing such a number of shrivelled old hags dancing round a great brindled goat, that sat with much gravity in the midst of the ring, he suddenly burst out in these words, "good God, what a mad company have we here!" when suddenly down came tumbling, John of Hembach, and dislocated his shoulder, and when he called to the company for help, all were gone, and he heard nothing but the night-wind, sighing over the long grass of the heath on which he lay. But we are not to suppose that all who used the art-magic, were evil doers. For the illustrious Thuanus, in his memoirs, informs us that a man named Beaumont, being examined before the Parliament of Paris, stood forth manfully in favour of his calling, and maintained that the magic he

had studied was for the good, and not the evil of mankind ; that in place of having any thing in common with the vulgar witches and miscreants, who, only operated through the agency of malignant spirits and of charms, and unhappily desecrated the lofty science which he cultivated ; his power really gave command over evil demons, controlled their wickedness, and turned their mischievous intentions into good. He acknowledged, that he had acquired the art of foreseeing evil, but he only used his knowledge to avert it, and that he had the power of transporting his body with incredible celerity, from one place to another, but he used his power for general good, to bring about the happiness of mankind, and to heal division amongst individuals, and promote the peace of nations. He also acknowledged at his examination, that there existed schools of his high and divine art all over the world, in Spain more especially, where they were in great numbers in Toledo, Grenada, and Cordova ; and that also in Germany, they were equally flourishing, until Luther having begun his heresy, sectarianism had put an extinguisher on his sublime art. Pity it was, that Beaumont, in spite of all his pretensions was committed to the flames.\*

I could adduce sundry other examples, elucidating the existence of demonology and witchcraft, but I fear that your patience as well as my paper might be exhausted, and thinking as we do, that one modern instance is worth ten ancient ones ; for man will ever be most interested with what comes near in his own time, and belongs to his own country, I shall conclude this letter with a well attested event, as recorded by a religionist of credit and piety, whose life and works have just appeared before the public, under the title of “ A Brief Memoir of the Life and Christian Experience of the Rev. Henry Moore, assistant to the Rev. John Wesley.”

“ Another occurrence made this circuit remarkable. I have doubt if I should introduce this extraordinary event into this narrative. But, as Mr. Wesley has observed, I do not think that I owe such service to the infidels of our day, as to give up any thing to them which is sanctioned by the holy Scriptures, and therefore necessary to be known by all who rightly appreciate the word and work of God. It is a little thing with me that I cannot fully account for it ; but it was a great thing with me then, and is so at this day, to have such proof of the fact, as is allowed among the most civilized nations to be sufficient to dispose, not only of property, but also of life.

“ The village of Drummaron is situated about three miles from Tran-

\* This fact is taken from the sixth book of De Thou's Memoirs, and it would appear, that this confession of Beaumont was not extorted from him, in order to escape the agony of the rack, nor was it brought against him by misled or malicious accusers. De Thou tells the story thus :—The judges of Angouleme, had condemned a gentleman of the name of Beaumont, for the crime of magic ; he had appealed to the Parliament of Paris, and while conducting him there, he was stopped at Chinon by a lady of the highest quality, who was rather too curious about these matters. He remained there for two years, and the story went abroad, that he both said and did surprising things. Gilles De Souvrè, governor of Tours, who happened to be at Chinon, had a desire to see and question him, and he obtained permission from the president De Thou ; but when he requested of De Thou to put some questions to him, the president excused himself, as likely hereafter to be obliged to interrogate him at Paris in his official capacity. So the Sieur Calignon took upon him to speak with him—Calignon was very well fitted to do so—he was acquainted with law, mathematics, and philosophy ;—during the examination, Souvrè and De Thou, were hid behind the arras, in an embrasure of the window ; Calignon insinuated himself so much into the confidence, and identified himself with the spirit of the criminal, who after a delay of trial for two years, almost considered himself a freeman, and with full confidence as between two friends, he avowed facts of a surprising character.—Mem. De Thou, Lib. VI.

deragee. We had a small Society there, which we visited once a fortnight; and were entertained at the house of Mr. John Stuart, a farmer, who was also employed in the linen manufacture. Next door to him three sisters lived in a cottage together, and supported themselves by spinning yarn, which they sold to the weavers. They were tenants to Mr. Stuart, and were also members of our Society for several years;—rather beyond the middle age of life,—of good understanding, and maintained an irreproachable character.

“Soon after Christmas of that year, (1780,) I heard that these poor women were strangely disturbed, and much injured in their persons, and in the few goods they possessed, by an invisible agency which night and day terrified and molested them, and wounded many visitors, whom curiosity or sympathy had drawn to their dwelling. Their wheels were broken to pieces before their eyes, and all that they possessed either demolished or rendered useless, except their bed, in which they all slept together; and even their bed-clothes were tossed about, and at one time raised up and thrust between the rafters and the thatch; for the cottage had no ceiling. Their provisions, also, were destroyed, or removed for a time, and then as strangely restored. Their winter heap of potatoes, the great support of life for the poor, were used by invisible hands in pelting them and their visitors. Stones and hard pieces of dirt, which must have been got from without, were also used, and many were thus wounded and bruised in a severe manner. My colleague, who had preceded me in the regular way, had been wounded thus, and obliged to fly from the cottage, after having ventured to examine the premises in which he had braved those assaults for some time.

“I arrived in my course at Tanderagee, and several persons attended there, who testified what they had seen and heard at Drummarron, and what not a few of them had felt in their own persons. All these were members of our Societies, of whose veracity I could have no reasonable doubt. Still I was sceptical.

“I found it hard, however, to resist the many testimonies respecting the scene at Drummarron, against which no reasonable objection could be brought, and determined strictly to investigate the whole of this strange business.

“The next day I went over to Drummarron, and in the house of Mr. Stuart examined him and his family, all of whom had been witnesses and sufferers, more or less, in this strange warfare. I examined the women who were immediately concerned, and my doubts gave way. I now became really troubled, and testified my fear lest the parties, and perhaps the Society in general, had departed from the Lord, and provoked Him to give them up into the hands of the enemy,—having that Scripture much on my mind, “there is no enchantment against Jacob, nor divination against Israel.” But though they were all ready to acknowledge much unfaithfulness to the grace of God, yet I could not discover that any of them had wickedly departed from their Lord.

“Although I wished to make a thorough examination, I acknowledge I did not like the idea of being put to shame by these invisible enemies of God and man, and I prayed to the Lord, with submission, that he would not suffer it. I then went into the cottage. It consisted of four naked walls, no recess, nor any place of retirement of any kind, not even a cupboard to afford concealment. Their poor bed was on one side, and the fragments of their wheels, stools, &c. lay about in all directions. I could not but admire the constancy of the poor inmates, who had determined, for such a length of time, not to give place to the Devil by leaving the house. They had even solicited that the class, which usually met at Mr. Stuart’s, might assemble in their cottage. This was granted, but the trial could not be repeated. As soon as they met, the disturbance began; it increased while they were singing; the class-paper was torn to pieces before their eyes; potatoes, hard dirt, and stones flew in all directions; and when, undismayed by all this, they knelt down to prayer, they were thrown against each other with such violence that they were obliged to fly, to avoid serious injury. There was, however, no disturbance while I stayed, but it was quickly re-

sumed ; for, a part of Mr. Stuart's family, having remained behind, came running after me into the house, the disturbance having begun as soon as I departed.

" They then requested me to preach, that evening, in the disturbed dwelling, instead of Mr Stuart's kitchen, the usual place. I did not approve of this ; but I feared to refuse, lest the poor people should be discouraged, when they most needed support, I accordingly spoke on the occasion, to as many as could get into the house, (a large company being outside,) and strove to turn the alarm into a permanently edifying result. There was no disturbance during the service, nor in the meeting of the Society.

" I now seriously considered the case, and thought what should be done. I knew there was one remedy, and but one. One of the poor women, however, addressed me. She said, ' Sir, the Romish Priest has been with us ; and he says he will deliver us if we will attend to him. While I thought of an answer,' she continued, ' I thought, Sir, of that Scripture, when he made the proposal, " Master, we saw one casting out Devils in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followed not with us. And Jesus said, Forbid him not." ' I replied, ' I will not forbid him ; but I charge you not to suffer him to use any means but that which is allowed in the Scripture. If you do, you cannot be any longer united with us. The means the Scripture prescribes, are fasting and prayer ; if he will join us herein, he shall be welcome. If not, we can have nothing to do with him.' They were satisfied with this ; and the Priest, refusing to act, except in his own way, was dismissed. I then immediately appointed a day of fasting and prayer, allowing sufficient time to warn all the Societies in the neighbourhood, who united with much fervency in imploring help and deliverance from the Lord. We did not seek his face in vain. After that day they had no more disturbance for upwards of a month ; and they hoped the Lord had stilled the enemy. But the strange sound had reached Guilford, a few miles off ; and Sir Richard Johnson, the great man of the place, (John Stuart's landlord,) attended by three or four gentlemen, visited them unexpectedly.

" He entered with his usual ease and carelessness, saying, ' So, my good woman, I hear the Devil has been among you. Come, tell us all about it.' They accordingly stated several particulars, to the great amusement of the gentlemen, who, after much pleasantry, were about to take their leave ; when a large potatoe was thrown, which was presently followed by a shower of stones and hard dirt. The gentlemen, much alarmed, sought shelter ; but could find none from the four bare walls. Sir Richard caught up a shovel, and advanced from one wall to the other ; but the missiles increasing, he was glad to throw down the shovel, and to follow his companions, who had retreated into Mr. Stuart's house, crying out, ' John, I am convinced. This is no fancy. There is certainly another world, and a Devil too.' "

I now take my leave, having in my just opinion, fully shown that Sir Walter Scott is not justified in his scepticism, and that there are more things that call for man's credence, than his paltry philosophy can measure. In my next, I shall, if permitted, enter into the consideration of ghosts and dreams, and expect to prove, just as decidedly, that such existences are permitted, by a wise and overruling power, to visit the glimpses of the moon, and keep up that connexion between both worlds, which must be so useful in confounding infidelity, and putting to the blush that phyrrenism and sadduceeism, which now, alas ! so unfortunately prevails, and in whose ranks it is not certainly the desire to enlist, of

Your obedient servant,

CASPAR OUFLE.

Fairy Field, county of Sligo.